

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL IMMEDIATE

INFO USMISSION USUN NY PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MANILA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY

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AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 219341

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UNGA, SK, NK

SUBJECT: DEFERRAL OF KOREAN ITEM AT 31ST UNGA

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REFS: (A) SEOUL 6849 (NOTAL) (B) USUN 3219 (NOTAL)

(C) JAKARTA 11515 (NOTAL) (D) USUN 3490 (NOTAL)

1. WE AGREE WITH ROK FONMIN (SEOUL REFTTEL) THAT TIME HAS COME FOR CLOSE CONSULTATION BETWEEN ROKG AND USG ON DEFERRAL STRATEGY. IT IS ESSENTIAL, IF SUCH AN EFFORT IS TO BE UNDERTAKEN, THAT IT BE DONE WITH FULL AWARENESS OF RISKS INVOLVED AND CHANCES OF SUCCESS, AND WITH WELL-PLANNED TACTICS AGREED UPON BY US, ROK AND OTHER CORE GROUP MEMBERS. EMBASSY SEOUL IS ACCORDINGLY REQUESTED TO DISCUSS QUESTION IN DEPTH WITH MFA, ELICITING ROKG VIEWS AND DESCRIBING OUR PRELIMINARY THINKING AS OUTLINED BELOW.

2. WE START FROM PREMISE THAT THE KEY TO SUCCESS IS FOR DEFERRAL MOVE TO BE RAISED BY THOSE NOT CLOSELY IDENTIFIED WITH SOUTH KOREAN POSITION. WE ALSO BELIEVE NATURAL INCLINATION OF MAJORITY, BOTH IN GENERAL COMMITTEE AND PLenary, IS TO AVOID ANOTHER POINTLESS UN DEBATE IN WHICH TWO CONFLICTING RESOLUTIONS EMERGE. TO CAPITALIZE ON THIS SENTIMENT, THOSE SPONSORING DEFERRAL MUST NOT BE IDENTIFIED WITH EITHER SIDE.

3. AT SAME TIME, WE NEED TO WEIGH CAREFULLY (FIRST WITH ROK AND LATER WITH OTHER CORE GROUP MEMBERS) POTENTIAL COUNTERVAILING FACTORS, SUCH AS: A) TO WHAT EXTENT WILL SENTIMENT FOR AVOIDING DEBATE BE ERODED BY SIMPLE INSISTENCE OF HOSTILE RES BACKERS THAT ALL THEY SEEK IS DEBATE OF IMPORTANT MATTER PLACED ON AGENDA ACCORDING TO PROPER PROCEDURES: AND B) WHAT MIGHT EFFECTS BE IF DEFERRAL EFFORT COINCIDES WITH SC DISCUSSIONS OF NAMIBIA IN WHICH IMPORTANT SUPPORTERS OF ROK MAY WELL FIND THEMSELVES AT ODDS WITH AFRICANS ON ISSUE OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE TO LATTER. WE ALSO NEED TO ASSESS CAREFULLY THE HARM THAT WOULD BE DONE IF DEFERRAL EFFORT IS UNDERTAKEN AND FAILS -- BOTH IN TERMS OF VOTE CHANGES ON THE COMPETING RESOLUTIONS AND BROADER PSYCHOLOGICAL DAMAGE OF A SUBSTANTIAL DEFEAT EARLY IN GA.

4. ASEAN COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY MALAYSIA AND INDONESIA, HAVE EXPRESSED SPECIAL INTEREST IN PURSUING DEFERRAL OPTION. SO ALSO HAS MAURITANIA. FRANCE CLEARLY SEES ITSELF AS PLAYING AN ACTIVE ROLE IN PROMOTING DEFERRAL. IN
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OUR VIEW, BASIC TACTIC SHOULD BE TO ENCOURAGE ASEANS AND FRANCE TO TAKE THE LEAD -- WITH FORMER DOING MOST OF THE ACTIVE LOBBYING AMONG NON-ALIGNED, WHILE FRANCE (POSSIBLY WITH AUSTRALIA AND JAPAN) WORKS BEHIND THE SCENES TO DEVELOP STRATEGY AND SUPPORT ASEAN EFFORTS. (FRANCE IS GENERALLY VIEWED AS TAKING INDEPENDENT STANDS AND ITS INFLUENCE WITH ARABS AND AFRICANS SHOULD BE PARTICULARLY HELPFUL.)

5. EUROPEAN CORE GROUP MEMBERS (UK, FRG, BELGIUM AND NETHERLANDS) WOULD SEEM TO BE IN BEST POSITION TO BROACH STRATEGY TO FRENCH. THEY WOULD PRESUMABLY WANT TO PRESENT IDEA AS A TACTIC FOR CARRYING OUT A FRENCH OBJECTIVE (AS INDEED IT IS -- E.G., SEOUL 6236.) CORE GROUP EUROPEANS MIGHT DECIDE AMONG THEMSELVES THAT IT WOULD BE PREFERABLE FOR ONE OF THEM TO APPROACH FRENCH TO AVOID IMPRESSION OF CONCERTED CORE GROUP DEMARCHE. US WOULD OF COURSE BE WILLING TO HELP IF EUROPEANS CONSIDERED IT DESIRABLE.

6. WE AGREE WITH USUN (REF B) THAT DEFERRAL SHOULD NOT BE PURSUED UNLESS THERE IS A REASONABLE PROSPECT OF WINNING. CHANCE OF OBTAINING A FAVORABLE GENERAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION WOULD SEEM TO BE SIGNIFICANTLY BETTER THAN THAT. AS FOR PLENARY, IT IS CLEARLY IMPOSSIBLE TO OBTAIN HARD INFORMATION ON WHETHER A CHALLENGE TO A GENERAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION FOR DEFERRAL WOULD SUCCEED WITHOUT TELEGRAPHING OUR INTENTION TO WORK FOR DEFERRAL. IT SEEMS TO US PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT TO AVOID THIS. A PREMATURE LOBBYING EFFORT, OR EVEN THE APPEARANCE OF UNDUE INTEREST IN DEFERRAL, WOULD LEAD NORTH KOREA'S SUPPORTERS TO MOUNT A COUNTEROFFENSIVE BEFORE MODERATE NON-ALIGNED SUPPORT HAS A CHANCE TO DEVELOP. THUS THE BEST APPROACH WOULD SEEM TO BE TO ENCOURAGE FRANCE AND THE ASEANS TO PROCEED IN THE WAY DESCRIBED ABOVE, AND THEN PULL BACK IF THEIR SOUNDINGS SHOW INSUFFICIENT SUPPORT IN PLENARY AND GENERAL COMMITTEE.

7. IF ROKG AGREES, WE WOULD HOPE TO BE IN POSITION TO PUT THESE IDEAS TO CORE GROUP WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 6. IDEALLY, WE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE TWO CORE GROUP MEETINGS NEXT WEEK -- ONE MID-WEEK TO PROPOSE SCENARIO AND A CONFIDENTIAL

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SECOND FRIDAY TO RECEIVE CORE GROUP CONCURRENCE. EUROPEAN CORE GROUP MEMBERS COULD THEN APPROACH FRANCE, WHICH WOULD BE IN POSITION TO SET SCENARIO IN MOTION WITH ASEANS WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 13.

8. FOR JAKARTA: IN LIGHT OF CENTRAL ROLE THAT WE HOPE INDONESIANS WILL PLAY IN DEFERRAL EFFORT (WHICH YOU SHOULD NOT OF COURSE DISCUSS WITH GOI), YOU SHOULD INFORM MFA THAT IDEA OF PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO HOSTILE RESOLUTION SEEMS RISKY AND PREMATURE AND WE WOULD APPRECIATE THEIR NOT PURSUING IT NOW.

ROBINSON

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